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would inevitably starve without a knowledge of the route or the guides.

During our stay here I nearly fell a victim to a matrimonial entanglement. A fair young Indian, whose hair cut across the forehead denoted widowhood, moreover having several mares and considerable possessions, to whom I had perhaps paid some slight attention, proposed that I should set up toldo with her. This was quite out of my programme of the journey, but inasmuch as the alliance might prove useful, as well as agreeable, and feeling lonely in the absence of any particular friend, I half agreed; so a go-between was despatched to arrange the dowry, and it was settled that I should give a revolver in exchange for two horses to be provided by the fair one's friends. However, the evening before the happy day on which we were to have been united, the alarm came, and as she belonged to the Southern Indians, I thought better of giving up my arms; so I assigned as a reason for withdrawing from my bargain, that I did not wish to leave my friend Orkeke's toldo. I have no doubt that her people, desiring the help of my firearms, had suggested the match to secure me to support their side. The lady at first was rather disgusted, but soon got over it, and we remained on our former friendly terms.

In this encampment two disagreements occurred between Indians and their wives, which were the only matrimonial squabbles that came under my notice during my wanderings in their company. One occurred between Tankelow and his spouse in our toldo. It began by Tankelow's striking his daughter, which his wife angrily resented; from words they came to blows, and the squaw was getting rather the best of it, when Mrs. Orkeke interposed with a strong arm, and forcibly put a stop to the disturbance.

The following day Tankelow drove his horses off separately, but towards evening a reconciliation was effected. On the 3rd of October we left Gelgel-aik and marched west in the face of a bitterly cold wind. In the hunt not less than seven

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The same ceremonials observed on the attainment of puberty by a girl. The important event is announced by her father to the caciques, who thereupon notifies it to the doctor. The girl herself is placed in the "pretty-house", and no one allowed to enter it. Marriages amongst the Tehuelches are always those of inclination, and if the damsel does not like the suitor to her hand, her parents never force her to comply with their wishes, although the match may be an advantageous one. The usual custom is for the bridegroom, after he has secured the consent of his damsel, to send either a brother or some intimate friend to the parents, offering so many mares, horses, or silver ornaments for the bride. If the parents consider the match desirable, as soon after as circumstances will permit, the bridegroom, dressed in his best, and mounted on his best horse, proceeds to the tolde of his intended, and hands over the gifts; the parents then return gifts of equivalent value, which, however, in the event of a separation, are the property of the bride. After this the bride is escorted by the bridegroom to his tolde, amongst the cheers of his friends, and the singing of the women. Mares are generally then slaughtered, and a feast takes place. The animals being killed, cooked, and eaten on the spot, great care being taken that the dogs do not touch any of the meat or offal, as it is considered unlucky. The head, backbone, and tail, together with the heart and liver, are taken up to the top of a neighbouring hill, as an offering to the "Gualychu", or evil spirit. An Indian is allowed to have as many wives as he can support. However, it is rare to find a man with more than two, and they more generally only have one.

On the death of a Tehuelche all his horses, dogs, and other animals are killed; his ponchos, if he possesses any ornaments, bolas, and other belongings, are placed in a heap and burned, the widow and other womenfolk keeping up a dismal wailing, and crying out loud in the most melancholy manner. The most of the horses is distributed amongst the relations; and the widow (who cuts her hair short in front, and smears black paint) repairs bag and baggage to the tolde of her relations, if she has any, if not, to that of the chief. The body, sewn up in a mantle, poncho, or coat of mail, if the deceased possessed one, is taken away by some of the relations, and buried in a sitting posture with its face to the east, a cairn of stones being generally erected over the place. I have never seen any of the graves described in Mr. Wood's book; but as I never travelled much by the sea-coast, they may exist and be the burial-places of some of the Fuegian tribe.

A curious custom prevails amongst these Indians with regard to their children. If a child hurts itself while playing, mares are slaughtered as a sort of thanksoffering that it did not die, a pretty

[Is. 85 for a western child. — Analyst]

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On the present occasion the movement was delayed, while we rode in search of something to eat. The chase was unsuccessful, scarcely enough being obtained to more than sharpen our appetites for dinner. The scanty meal being over, the whole company began their journey, which in its tortuous windings was not unlike that of the Israelites in the wilderness, but unlike that in the respect that we seemed to have no particular destination or object, except to explore new hunting-grounds, and gratify the capricious restlessness of the Indians. One very desirable end was answered, — we got enough to eat, as we were successful in killing a large quantity of game. The Indians it was noticeable, were never at a loss to find their camps. So familiar did they seem with all their haunts and the general shape of the country, that though the surface presented to my eye scarcely any distinguishable way-marks, they would strike off from any point, however distant, and go with unerring aim straight to their tents. In returning laden with booty to our new home, I was surprised to observe no indications whatever of water in the vicinity, a singular departure, at first sight, from their invariable custom, so far as I had noticed. Very soon the squaws issued from their huts, each with her leathern bucket. Curiosity prompted me to follow them a little way, when a spring was discovered, from which they had to dip the water with their ox-horn cups till the buckets were filled.

About this time a new phase of life presented itself, to cast light on an important item of the social economy established in Patagonia. Looking out of our wigwam one evening just at dusk, I noticed an unusual concourse of Indians about two hundred yards distant. There were

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•584 fifty or more, headed by one of the most ruffianly rascals in the tribe, marching in the direction of our lodge. I spoke to the chief about it, whereupon he went immediately to the back of the hut, and sat down on his little bed, his cutlass hanging beside him from a knot of one of the stakes. This he took down, laid it across his knees, and folded his arms. Something, I saw, was wrong. In anticipation of the worst that might befall me, I had found, a short time before, the handle of an old knife among the chief's trumpery, and also an odd blade; these I had put together, and the chief permitted me to carry it about my person, the only weapon he allowed me. I now planted myself on my knees beside him, and prepared to sell my life as dearly as possible, should the mob enter with evil designs towards me. The consciousness that I was in their power, and was sure to have the worst of any serious quarrel, made it my study to keep the peace with them as far as circumstances would admit; but there was a limit to my control of events, a very narrow limit, which I had constant reason to fear would be overborne by the impetuous hatred of my enemies, when nothing would be left but desperate resistance. Such a crisis seemed near, when the chief was himself reduced to a defensive attitude, and was indeed besieged in his own lodge.

The motley throng surrounded the hut, their numbers constantly swelled by fresh arrivals; some were squat upon the ground, others peeping through the crevices. Presently one of the number addressed the chief, and the two conversed for some time in a low and unintelligible, but decided and emphatic tone. The crowd outside ap-

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peared to be a good deal excited, and kept up a continuous hum of rapid conversation. I looked and listened, with mingled curiosity and dread, while the chief repeated the same thing over and over again, in a firm, authoritative tone, tinged with anger. Unable to conjecture what was on foot, or to bear any longer the agony of suspense, I patted him familiarly on his naked breast, told him he had "a good heart," begged that he would not suffer the Indians to harm me. "You go sleep," was his answer; "no Indians come into this house to-night." I inquired what they were after, but no answer was vouchsafed, and he resumed his mysterious colloquy with the outsiders. The idea of sleeping under such circumstances was out of the question; I was wide awake, and bent on keeping so, — sorely bewildered at the strange goings on, and not a little terrified, but holding fast by my sole weapon of defence, and waiting a favorable opportunity to interpose another inquiry. The chief turned his head; and, perceiving my vigilance, repeated in an angry tone his injunction to sleep. This was a drop too much; and, clasping my arms about his dirty neck, patting his breast, and looking (with as confiding an air as I could assume) into his dull eyes, I begged him to speak to me, to tell me what these men wanted. "Do they want to break my head?"

"The men don't want to hurt you," he said; "Indian wants a girl for his wife; poor Indian, very poor, got no horses nor anything else. I won't give him the woman."

So speedy a descent from the height of my fears was not satisfactory; it was impossible to credit this explanation of such a formidable scene. I apprehended that it was a pure fiction, extemporized for the purpose of quieting me;

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583 but, as he seemed more communicative, I swallowed my
584 doubts, and questioned him further. "What does poor Indian say?"

"Says he 'll steal plenty horses when we get where they are, and give the woman plenty of grease. Says he is a good hunter, good thief."

These high titles to consideration did not seem to be admitted by the party they were offered to conciliate; on the contrary, the chief pronounced him a sleepy mink-skin of a fellow, — no thief at all; one that would never own a horse in the world. This opinion, which he was good enough to favor me with, he communicated to the party chiefly concerned, telling him that he was a poor, good-for-nothing Indian, he should not have the woman, and that was the end of it. After a little more jabber, and abundance of wrangling, the mob dispersed, much to my relief. Satisfied, by further conversation on the subject with old Paroisilver, whose triumph over the mutiny had put him into better temper than usual, that the affair did not imminently concern my safety or welfare, I lay down to rest.

582 In answer to further inquiries, — for I must plead guilty to a good deal of curiosity in respect of the poor Indian and his blasted hopes, — I was informed that without the chief's consent no marriage was permitted; that, in his judgment, no Indian who was not an accomplished rogue, — particularly in the horse-stealing line, — an expert hunter, able to provide plenty of meat and grease, was fit to have a wife on any terms. He never gave his consent for such lazy ones to take an extra rib; but, he very considerately added, all the difference it made was that some

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one else had to support the squaw till her suitor proved himself worthy, and acquired sufficient wealth to justify taking her to his wigwam; and, if he cared much for his coury, he would not be long in earning her; it would make him a first-rate thief, — the most indispensable title to favor in the tribe. It appeared that the possession of two horses, one for himself and one for his intended, was regarded as the proper outfit in a matrimonial adventure.

The women are somewhat given to quarrelling among themselves; and, when their "combativeness" is once active, they fight like tigers. Jealousy is a frequent occasion. If a squaw suspects her liege lord of undue familiarity with a rival, she darts upon the fair enchantress with the fury of a wild beast: then ensues such a pounding, scratching and hair-pulling, as beggars description. The gay deceiver, if taken by surprise, slips quietly out, and stands at a safe distance to watch the progress of the combat, generally chuckling at the fun with great complacency. A crowd gathers round to cheer on the rivals; and the rickety wigwam, under the effect of the squall within, creaks and shivers like a ship in the wind's eye.

While the *contract* of marriage is so jealously regarded by the chief as to be subject to a veto in every case where a proposed match appears in his eyes unsuitable, the ceremony is literally nothing at all. Due sanction having been given by the supreme authority, the bridegroom takes home his bride for better or worse, without any of the festivity which graces similar occasions elsewhere. About this time, — for, as I had no means of journalizing my experience, or even keeping the reckoning of weeks and months, it is quite impossible to assign dates, — a mat-

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564 rimonial transactions took place, accompanied by unusual solemnities. The rank of one party, and the extraordinary accessories of the occasion, will justify a particular notice of this "marriage in high life."

One evening, the chief, his four wives, two daughters, an infant granddaughter, and myself, were scattered about the lodge, enveloped in a smoke of unusual strength and density. While the others sat around as unconcerned as so many pieces of bacon, I lay flat, with my face close to the ground, and my head covered with a piece of guanaco-skin, the only position in which it was possible to gain any relief from the stifling fumigation. While in this attitude, I fancied I heard the tramp of many feet without, and a confused muttering, as if a multitude of Indians were talking together. Presently a hoarse voice sounded in front, evidently aimed at the ears of some one within, to which the chief promptly replied. I caught a few words, — enough to satisfy me that I was not the subject of their colloquy, but that there was a lady in the case, — and listened curiously, without any of the fright which grew out of the previous negotiations. The conversation grew animated, and the equanimity of his high mightiness the chief was somewhat disturbed. I cast a penetrating glance into the smoke at the female members of our household, to discern, if possible, whether any one of them was specially interested. One look was sufficient; the chief's daughter (who, by the way, was a quasi widow, with one hopeful scion springing up by her side) sat listening to the conversation, with anxiety and apprehension visible in every feature. Her mother sat near her, her chin resting upon her hand, with an anxious and thoughtful expression

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of countenance. The invisible speaker without, it soon appeared, was an unsuccessful suitor of the daughter, and had come with his friends to press his claim. He urged his suit, if not with classic, with "earnest" eloquence, but with success ill proportioned to his efforts. The chief told him he was a poor, good-for-nothing fellow, had no horses, and was unfit to be his son-in-law, or any one else's. The outsider was not to be so easily put off; he pressed his suit with fresh energy, affirming that his deficiency of horses was from want of opportunity, not from lack of will or ability to appropriate the first that came within his reach. On the contrary, he claimed to be as ingenious and accomplished a thief as ever swung a lasso or ran off a horse, and a mighty hunter besides, whose wife would never suffer for want of grease. The inexorable chief hereat got considerably excited, told him he was a poor devil, and might be off with himself; he would n't talk any more about it.

The suppliant, as a last resort, appealed to the fair one herself, begging her to smile on his suit, and assuring her, with marked emphasis, that, if successful in his aspirations, he would give her *plenty of grease*. At this last argument she was unable to resist longer, but entreated her father to sanction their union. But the hard-hearted parent, not at all mollified by this appeal from his decision to an inferior tribunal, broke out in a towering passion, and poured forth a torrent of abuse. The mother here interposed, and besought him not to be angry with the young folks, but to deal more gently and considerately with them. She even hinted that he might have done injustice to the young man. He might turn out a smarter man than he had credit for. He might — who knew? — make a fine chief yet, possess

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plenty of horses, and prove a highly eligible match for their daughter. The old fellow had been (for him) quite moderate, but this was too much. His rage completely mastered him. He rose up, seized the pappoose's cradle, and hurled it violently out of doors, and the other chattels appertaining to his daughter went after it in rapid succession. He then ordered her to follow her goods *instanter*, with which benediction she departed, responding with a smile of satisfaction, doubtless anticipating the promised luxuries of her new home, the vision of which, through the present tempest, fortified her mind against its worst perils. Leaving the lodge, she gathered up her scattered effects, and, accompanied by her mother, the bridal party disappeared.

The chief sat on his horse-skin couch, his legs crossed partly under him, looking sour enough. Presently the bride and her mother returned, and now began the second scene. The chief no sooner recognised them than a sound — something between a grunt and a growl, but much nearer the latter than the former, and in a decided *crescendo* — gave warning of a fresh eruption. The rumbling grew more emphatic, and suddenly his fury burst on the head of his wife. Seizing her by the hair, he hurled her violently to the ground, and beat her with his clenched fists till I thought he would break every bone in her body, and reduce her substance to a jelly. Perhaps I was a little hard-hearted, but she had been one of my bitterest enemies, and I had a feeling that if some of her ill-will to me could be beaten out of her, I could be easily resigned to her fate. The drubbing ended, she rose and muttered something he did not like. He replied by a violent blow on the side of her head, that sent her staggering to the further end of the hut. This

invasion by his neighbors. As a matter of fact the unfortunate chief's family does not lose its right to its land, and with the passage of time it often happens that some descendant will re-establish the colony which his father, grandfather or brother destroyed either by bad luck or bad conduct. When a chief becomes old and unable to fulfill the obligations of his position he hands over his authority to a successor.

Marriages are made by a man's buying his wife from her father or from some other under whose guardianship she may be, and in proportion to her rank, good looks, conduct, etc. she is either more or less expensive. Her will is not taken into account for this transaction by her father or guardian, and she cannot set herself against her own sale. Each man may have one, two, or more wives of his own, depending on his wealth, but only rarely does a man have more than one unless he be a chief or an Indian of great power. Three is the greatest number of wives which any man gets to possess, and each husband has the right of selling his wives to another, but this resale makes the woman of little worth, and for that reason she is sold very cheaply: poor men only buy women in this way since they lack the funds to buy them first-hand. It is not considered improper to sell a woman to a relative, unless it be to the woman's son or brother, all other relatives being eligible as buyers. Many are the marriages of this type which are consumated because of the expense involved in procuring an unmarried woman. Single women, while they are yet young and have hopes of being married keep their virginity, but should these hopes vanish, they will have sex relations promiscuously. Those married women who find that the husband who bought them from their father or guardian is to their liking, are faithful, but should they not like their husbands they become troublesome -- yet adultery is not considered a crime unless committed in the husband's presence, and in such a case the adulterer and not the woman is blamed, and even then no punishment is meted out, the husband being easily mollified. The chief always has as a wife the daughter or sister of some other chief, and she is the head wife amongst his others, who must serve her in every way. Even if the chief should tire of his principal wife he may not sell her because it would be considered an insult and cause for an outbreak of war with her relatives. All these head wives are grave in demeanor, given to few words, live secluded in their tents, spend their time in pursuits suitable [74] to their position, and do not take part in the vain conversations of the other Indian women. The men never manhandle the women for any reason, except when drunk, and even in such a condition the chief will never strike his head wife although all the others may well receive their share of blows.